

**MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015**  
**6:30 P.M.**

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Monday, April 13, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Michael Baker, Ronald Atkinson, Ralph Atkinson, Odessa Gregg, Joseph Frazier and Emerson Hunt were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, and City Attorney Kenneth Davis.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press. (Hometown TV).

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on March 10, 2015, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Glenn Bridgers, acting supervisor of the Sanitation Department was named *March Employee of the Month* and presented with a gift certificate. Mayor Davis thanked Glenn for his hard work and his excellent performance during the absence of Mr. Ronnie Sanders.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis presented the Mayor's Monthly Beautification Award to Mrs. Hazel Gillian. He thanked her for her efforts to keep Marion beautiful.

Mr. T. Carroll Atkinson was present to speak on the naming of the newly renovated Elementary Gym (formerly the Marion High School Gym) to honor the late Miss Shannon Wilkerson, Marion High School's winningest basketball coach (1941-1966) with a record of 432 wins and 5 losses, including a span that consisted of 105 consecutive wins and included 7 state championships and 14 undefeated seasons. She dedicated 25 years to teaching the students at Marion High School. Mr. Atkinson presented over 300 signatures from former students, players and friends requesting the gym be named after Coach Wilkerson. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to honor Coach Shannon Wilkerson by naming the gymnasium in her memory,

and the documentation and signatures on the petition presented by Judge Atkinson become part of the minutes, seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt. Councilman Atkinson commented that it would be appropriate for the City to put a bronze plaque on the building as has been done in the past. Mr. T. Carroll Atkinson commented that the group he is representing would also be willing to help raise funds in order to help with the cost of the plaque. The motion carried.

Councilman Emerson Hunt made a motion to allow the Marion County Arts Council use of the Hike-Bike Trail for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chalk Walk on Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve the Standard Business License Application as recommended by MASC, seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt; motion carried.

Mayor Davis stated that the Recreation Department offices will be moving to the new gym. The Watsonia Building will still be used for rentals. Beginning next week the gym will be open for kids to come in and play basketball until 5 p.m., and when school is out they will be able to come and play from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Councilman Hunt commented that several adults asked about playing basketball after 5 p.m. Mayor Davis responded that he would discuss with the Recreation Director so that it could be worked out for the adults to get some free play. Two basketball camps are scheduled for the summer, June 8 – 11 with NBA star Raymond Felton speaking to the campers, and another camp later in the summer.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to give 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading on **ORDINANCE 15-01 AN ADDENDUM TO SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC SERVICE AGREEMENT**, as presented, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Attorney Davis suggested that item 12 and 13 be used as “clean up” ordinances. He has surveyed statewide and found that cities do the transfers off of simple Council approval during the course of the year, but at the end of the fiscal year they do a reconciliation ordinance to consolidate all changes Council made during the year and make everything balance out. Attorney

Davis suggested that 1<sup>st</sup> Reading on Ordinance 15-02 and 15-03 be given tonight and save them until the June or July meeting and then capture all of the Council transfers approved during the year. You will accomplish the goal of having the ordinances and allow you the practice that you have been engaged in for a while. Councilman Ralph Atkinson inquired if the Hospitality Budget and regular budget would be done individually, to which Mayor Davis responded they would be. The 1<sup>st</sup> Reading on **ORDINANCE 15-02 AN ORDINANCE AMEND THE HOSPITALITY BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015** carried.

Councilman Michael Baker made to motion to give 1<sup>st</sup> Reading to **ORDINANCE 15-03 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015**, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Mr. Ammons commented that we have always had a place for animal shelters in the City, but it is only in the Industrial District. This ordinance is just to clean up the language and will still have a place for an animal shelter in the Industrial District, but will now have conditions that they must be 300 feet from any property line, in all directions. The industrial areas are Blumenthal, Heritage, Metal Road and Eutaw. Councilman Atkinson commented that the public needs to know the reason this was first looked into was because of the situation that came up with the Marion County Animal Shelter and the move to Mullins by Paws to the Rescue. This gives our citizens a little more protection from having a nuisance in the City. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to give 1<sup>st</sup> Reading on **ORDINANCE 15-04, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE PET CARE FACILITIES ORDINANCES TO INCLUDE AN ANIMAL SHELTER DESIGNATION FOR FY 2014-2015**, as presented by the Administrator, seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt; motion carried.

Mr. Ammons presented one bid on the Cheezem Building in the amount of \$60,100, with a 5% check in hand. If the bid is accepted, he understands that the building is “as is” and we will not be making repairs. He will get a termite inspection (at his expense) for financing purposes and would like to close by May 31<sup>st</sup>. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to accept the bid as presented, seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt; motion carried.

Mayor Davis asked that Mr. Wayne George make his Health Insurance presentation at this time. Mr. George commented that it was renewal time for the BC/BS of SC health insurance benefits package for the City of Marion employees and recommended that some changes be made and would like to discuss this as a contractual health insurance matters in Executive Session

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. William Campbell, Vice Chair of the Senior Council, commented that he agreed with Councilman Hunt that the gym should be available at certain times for grownups to play basketball. He is also in agreement with Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson that there needs to be a way for seniors to know where to go in case of inclement weather. Also, the Senior Council would like to be in charge of what movies are shown and who can attend those events (i.e. children should be accompanied by an adult). Mayor Davis commented that his door is always open and that the co-chair has been in to make suggestions. Mayor Davis further commented that all councils would be re-organized and upgraded so that there will be better participation. The warming shelter info is announced on TV and the radio and we were the first in the area to offer a shelter and everyone was fed. Mayor Davis thanked the Fire Department, the High School and citizens for their help during these times. Mr. Campbell was invited by the Mayor to come by his office to get an update on future plans.

### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Ammons reported that the paving on Eutaw Street was now complete. The new City signs have been installed, one in front of the Police Department and one in front of Beneteau, and the brick work should be completed this week. Mr. Ammons met with SCDOT regarding the proposed truck route policy and their recommendation is that Council come up with a route and SCDOT will review it, then we would prepare a proper ordinance for the truck route. The 501 bypass will create the route around Main Street, and 76 (thru Liberty Street) would continue to be a truck route and that would basically be the only routes we would have for big trucks, unless they are making deliveries. One of the criteria from SCDOT is that the trucks are allowed to go into the City to make deliveries, the next step is for SCDOT to review this, send suggestions, and then the Attorney can prepare the proper ordinance. Councilman Hunt asked that trucks going to a repair shop also be allowed in the City. Mayor Davis commented that we are asking for this truck route

ordinance due to the damage being caused by trucks being driven all over town, including running up on sidewalks, tearing down flag poles, etc. and CTC will not continually give us money to repair those cracked/broken sidewalks. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to authorize the Mayor and the Administrator to move forward with this, with SCDOT, as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Odessa Gregg; motion carried.

### **CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE**

Attorney Davis had nothing to report at this time.

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Mayor Davis stated that Council receives Departmental reports in their packets. There were no comments from any Department heads or Committees.

### **DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL & MAYOR**

Councilman Michael Baker had no comment at this time.

Councilman Joseph Frazier commented that the map received in their packets did not have Bobby L. Davis Blvd listed and would like to know why it was left off. Mayor Davis responded that he and Mr. Ammons met with the County and were trying to get things straightened out with all of the street names that had been omitted. Mr. Ammons commented that Marion County published the map and there were several things wrong and we have sent them a list of corrections and they are in the process of correcting them. Councilman Frazier commented that Mr. Hunt has a building and the City is picking up the rubbish that was thrown out and how does that happen because they were told not to pick it up and he (Mr. Frazier was told that Mr. Ammons said to pick it up. Councilman Hunt responded that he owns the building and that Mr. Frazier should research and show him an ordinance or code that disallows him from getting the same rights that any other citizen gets; if he owns the building and is contracting the building, he should get the same rights as anyone else. Councilman Hunt has been trying to beautify his part of the community on the south side of Marion. He has spent his hard earned money, contracted his own workers, giving them jobs so they can earn a living and he challenges Councilman Frazier to say he has done the same. Councilman Hunt stated that he has his building

permits and his license and whenever he works on his own property and puts trash out, the City should pick it up. Councilman Hunt inquired of Councilman Frazier as to who paid for the City workers to go and clean up the parking lot at the Cathedral Bible College. Councilman Hunt stated that it has become personal when the police have come and surround his place twice, trying to arrest his workers and he does not want his personal business mentioned. Mr. Ammons stated that the City picks up everything; on a commercial building if you're changing one toilet or changing out a few boards (for example) we pick it up. If you are remodeling the building, then we don't pick it up and different arrangements must be made. Mr. Ammons met with Mr. Hunt and he ordered a container when he was told he was at the point where the City could not pick up any more. There were more renovations that were originally planned.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson wanted to correct what he said last month when he stated that we used a \$75,000 backhoe to pick up garbage, it was \$74,194. We are still using it today, maybe we could have one person on the dump truck instead of the backhoe loading pine straw and leaves. He is asking because residents are asking him about this. Mayor Davis commented that it is Mr. Ammons' job to oversee the Department Heads to which he informed the Mayor that was not taking place anymore. We discussed that and he talked to the Department Heads. If it is still happening, Mr. Ammons will contact the Department Head and find out why that is still happening. Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson asked Chief Tennie if Jones Avenue was being patrolled to try to correct and clean it up. Chief Tennie responded that Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights were being beefed up and they will be using a golf cart and foot patrol in that area the next couple of weekends.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson thanked the committee that worked to name the gym after Coach Shannon Wilkerson, for their hard work, Mrs. Lina Rice in particular. He feels like it was a very worthwhile effort and appreciates them being here tonight.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg had a citizen ask about a burned house in the 400 block of Pine Street and the need to board up the windows for safety purposes. Mr. Ammons will check on that.

Councilman Emerson Hunt commented that his desire on this Council is to better himself and the community and it seems foolery that colleagues would try to dissuade him from being productive in the community. He further commented that it's sad to speak about unity and togetherness, when in reality we smile and pretend that we're together and it's not true. It was embarrassing for his property to be surrounded by the police twice, looking for a guy with a warrant from 2008 for telephone harassment. If any person on Council wished to meet with Councilman Hunt to discuss his personal business and what he is trying to accomplish, he asked that they come to him personally, not to try to embarrass him in public and degrade what he is trying to do in his community. Councilman Hunt stated that ever since he has been on Council, it has been issue after issue, and it is personal attacks. Mayor Davis asked that Chief Tennie follow up and check into what went on at Mr. Hunt's business and get back with the Mayor so that he can report back to Council at the next meeting regarding the issue Councilman Hunt has been speaking about. Mayor Davis stated that the Police Department is here to protect the City and not harass Council or the citizens. Chief Tennie will report the details back to Mayor Davis.

Mayor Bobby Davis offered condolences to Mr. Mike Richardson at the passing of his father, Mr. Morris Richardson. We will apply for a grant for summer camp as soon as our sign project is complete. PDRTA came by to see when they could get their extra funds. We received \$368,000 and were able to pave 3 streets; we are in hopes of receiving more funds from CTC to do more paving. There are 425 jobs available at the beach (hotels) and we are trying to help provide a bus to enable our residents to go to work and enable them to provide for their families. The Employee Banquet was held at Woodhaven and very well attended. Mayor Davis thanked the sponsors who provided prizes for the employees' drawing. The City has a new sweeper operator. The gym will be open from 3-5 during school and 8-5 when school is out for the summer. Rev. Joshua Nelson is heading up a back-to-school program and asked the City join with him to make that happen. Mayor Davis will provide more details to Council as they become available.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a Contractual Matter – Health Insurance and a Legal Matter – City Attorney, seconded by

Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried. Upon returning from Executive Session, Mayor Davis stated that no action was taken.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to return to regular session, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to move forward with the recommendation of the insurance agent as regards to the health insurance plan for the City of Marion and authorize the Mayor and City Administrator to do whatever it takes to enter into an agreement to keep our employees insured next year; with a 4.3% increase and with a caveat that this is basically the same coverage we have been offering our employees and retirees, and to move 5 pre-65 retirees to an individual plan. Councilman Michael Baker seconded the motion; motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Bobby Davis made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried.

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Mayor Bobby L. Davis

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City Clerk Pam Jones

Taped: April 14, 2015